COLONY OF SEYCHELLES

ABBREVIATED

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL and HEALTH

DEPARTMENT

FOR THE YEAR

1945

LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE
LIBRARY
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AND TROPICAL MEDICINE

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1946

Medical Department,

Seychelles, 26th July, 1946.

Annual Medical and Health report for the Year ending 31st December, 1945.

I have the honour to submit for the information of His Excellency the Governor, and for transmission to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, for the Colonies, the Medical Report on the Health and Sanitary conditions of the Seychelles for the year 1945.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. Y. DUNLOP,

Senior Medical Officer.

To

The Secretary to Government,

Seychelles.

COLONY OF SEYCHELLES.

ABBREVIATED ANNUAL REPORT

On the Medical and Health Department

1st January to 31st December 1945.

ADMINISTRATION.

A. STAFF.

Dr. C. R. C. Rainsford was Senior Medical Officer throughout the year.

Dr. Joseph proceeded to India for 6 months leave in May—his place was taken by Dr. Singleton seconded from Kenya.

Dr. de Souza left the Colony at the end of April on transfer to Zanzibar. The vacancy was filled by the appointment of Dr. Singh.

Sister Laure the Senior Sister retired on pension in March. The Colony owes her a debt of gratitude for her 34 years of faithful service in the Seychelles Hospital.

Sister Augustin resigned in March and returned to Europe later in the year. These two vacancies were filled by Sister Patricia and Sister Marie. Both are fully qualified hospital sisters.

B. NEW BUILDINGS.

Praslin Cottage Hospital.

The main hospital building was finished in December. It contains two 6 bed wards for males and females, a store, out-patient room, minor operation room and a private ward. Indoor sanitation with a septic tank has been provided. The Maternity Ward and Nurses' quarters will be finished in 1946.

C. LEGISLATION.

The following Legislation affecting Public Health was enacted in 1946.

1. Government notification No. 50 of 1945—Amendment to Bake-houses Regulations
2. Government notification No. 64 of 1945—Amendment The Defence (Treatment of Venereal Disease) Regulations.
3. Proclamation No. 2 of 1945—Declaring that the disease known as "Infantile Paralysis" (Acute Anterior Poliomyelitis) to be a contagious and infectious disease.
4. Notification No. 140 of 1945—Bake-houses Regulations for North Mahé District.
5. Ordinance No. 13 of 1945 to amend the Medical Practioners and Dentist Ordinance 1934.
6. Ordinance No. 15 of 1945 to amend the Leprosy Ordinance No. 17 of 1938.

D. FINANCE.

Hospital, Medical and Sanitary Revenue.

Hospital, Maternity and Mental Hospital Fees		Rs. 15,322.25
Quarantine Fees		45.00
Sale of Medicines		3,628.53
	Total	18,995.78

Medical and Sanitary Expenditure.

The estimated expenditure for 1945 was :—		
Personal Emoluments		Rs. 79,515
Other Charges		94,490
	Total	174,005
The actual expenditure was :—		
Personal Emoluments		Rs. 80,631.79
Other Charges		80,438.47
	Total	161,070.26

PUBLIC HEALTH.

GENERAL REMARKS.

There were no epidemics in 1945 and the general health of the population was reasonably good.

Dr. Singleton started a nutrition survey by examining 5 families (21 persons) living on a coconut plantation and 48 dock labourers. In both groups he found evidence of malnutrition and was particularly struck by the mental apathy of the persons examined.

Much work must be done before any definite conclusions can be drawn. Dr. Singleton writes that his "findings cannot be considered as more than pointers."

The nutrition problem can only be solved by close co-operation between the Medical, Educational and Agricultural departments. A step forward has been taken by the importation of pedigree bulls to improve the local breed of cattle. Much has to be done to encourage the cultivation and use of green and root vegetables.

We were fortunate in obtaining limited quantities of penicillin throughout the year. It was used in a case of pneumococcal meningitis (recovered) and in other severe septic cases with good results.

Resistant cases of gonorrhœa were also treated with excellent results.

Hospital and Dispensaries.

The number of cases treated at the Seychelles Hospital and outlying dispensaries was :—

In patients :	Seychelles Hospital and Maternity Section	2,983
	Cottage Hospital Praslin	100
	Total	3,083

Out-patients :	Seychelles Hospital	Anse Royale	Praslin & La Digue
New cases	3,730	1,129	790
Re-attendances	2,919	2,335	601
Total	6,649	3,464	1,391

I. GENERAL DISEASES.

As in former years anæmia and diseases of the digestive system were common. This was due to helminthic infestation.

Cases of pneumonia (all types) treated in Seychelles Hospital were 124 with 5 deaths compared with 143 with 4 deaths in 1944.

Cases of amœbic hepatitis rose to 223 as against 140 in 1944 and liver abscess cases decreased to 10 (1 death) against 24 in 1944.

Infective hepatitis was commoner, 73 cases were treated in Hospital and 10 out-patients.

II. COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.

Dysentery. 125 cases of amœbic dysentery were treated in hospital with 1 death and 233 cases were treated as out-patient.

Under the headings Diarrhœa and Enteritis there were 176 in-patients and 373 out-patients. These were fairly mild infections and responded to sulphaguanidine.

Tuberculosis. The figures again show a rise—29 patients with pulmonary tuberculosis were treated with 2 deaths in the hospital and 2 cases of miliary tuberculosis with 2 deaths.

Helminthic Diseases. Especially due to ascaris continue to be common. Ankylostomiasis is fairly prevalent also.

Venereal diseases. Our efforts against venereal diseases were continued throughout the year. An encouraging feature is the improved attendances at the clinics. Cases of gonorrhœa were admitted to hospital whenever possible and treated with sulphapyridine or penicillin and the majority were cured. It is still difficult to persuade the women to come for treatment in the early stages but a slight improvement in this respect has been noticed. A talk on V. D. was given over the local radio, when the necessity for both partners being treated was emphasised.

The numbers attending the clinics were as follows :—

	New Cases Males.	Re-attendances.	New Cases Females.	Re-attendances.
Syphilis Primary	14	—	6	—
Secondary	16	—	8	—
Tertiary	39	1287	40	966
Gonorrhœa	109	—	10	—
Others	3	—	—	—

VITAL STATISTICS.

The estimated population on the 31st December 1945 was 34,419 or 16,919 males and 17,500 females an increase of 500 over 1944.

Births :—875 births were registered as compared with 846 in 1944. The birth rate was 25.42 as compared with 24.74 in 1944.

Still-Births :—44 still-births were registered in 1945 an increase of 2 over 1944.

Deaths :—375 deaths were registered, a decrease of 116 over 1944 and the death rate was 10.89 compared with 14.43 in 1944.

Infantile Mortality :—The Infantile Mortality was 52. Infant mortality rate was 62.85.

Causes of deaths.

	Corresponding No. in International List 1938 Revision.	*Number of deaths.*
Tetanus	12	1
Tuberculosis of the respiratory system	13	34
Other forms of tuberculosis	14/22	2
Leprosy	23	2
Dysentery (a) Amœbic	27	5
(b) Bacillary		2
(c) Undefined		9
Venereal Diseases Syphilis	30	11
Ankylostomiasis	40	1
Other helminthic disease	42	1
Other infective or parasitic disease	43,44	3
Cancer and other tumours (a) Malignant	45/55	5
(b) Non-malignant	56	1
Diabetes	61	2
Disease of endocrine glands	62/66	1
Anæmias (b) other	73	17
Other diseases of the blood	72,74/76	1
Mental diseases	84	3
Other diseases of the nervous system	80/83, 85/7	27
Heart diseases	90/95	13
Other diseases of the circulatory system	96/103	2
Pneumonia (a) broncho	107	5
(b) lobar		5
(c) unspecified		9
Other respiratory diseases	104/5, 110/14	17
Ulcers of stomach and duodenum	117	1
Diarrhœa and Enteritis (a) under 2 years	119	9
(b) 2 years and over		10
Appendicitis	121	1
Hernias	122	4
Cirrhosis of the liver	124	1
Other diseases of the liver	125/27	3
Other diseases of the digestive system	123, 128/9	5
Nephritis	130/2	2
Other non-venereal diseases of the genito-urinary system	133/9	7
Toxaemias of pregnancy	134, 147/8	4
Other conditions of puerperal state	145/6, 149/50	3
Diseases of the bones (ex. T. B.)	154/6	1
Congenitial malformations	157	3
Diseases peculiar to the first year of life		
(a) Congenitial debility	158	8
(b) Premature birth (ex-still birth)	159	14
(d) Other conditions	161	3
Senility	162	62
External causes (c) other causes	169/98	8
Ill-defined causes	199/200	47
Total		375

HYGIENE AND SANITATION.

1. MOSQUITO AND INSECT DISEASES.

The usual precautions were undertaken to prevent the introduction of Anopheline mosquitoes.

Yellow Fever precautions :— No persons coming from an endemic area were allowed into the Colony unless they were in possession of a valid Yellow Fever Certificate, or could satisfy the Department that they had left an endemic area not less than 6 days previously.

Mr. Harper a Field entomologist made a mosquito survey of Victoria and its surroundings. No Anopheline mosquitoes were found but Aedes Aegypti and other species of Aedes were discovered. Mr. Harper made certain recommendations with regard to control of pools of water under stand pipes. These recommendations are being put into effect.

2. Epidemic and Infectious Diseases.

Small-pox :—There were no cases of Small-Pox. 735 infants were vaccinated and 163 adults re-vaccinated.

Leprosy :—No change to report. The number of lepers in the Colony at the end of 1945 was 75.

Helminthiasis :—11,428 doses of oil of Chenopodium were dispensed at the various clinics throughout the Colony.

SCHOOL HYGIENE.

The annual inspection for North Mahé Schools in 1945 included for the first time the inspection of three schools, namely, St. Louis College, St. Joseph Convent and St. Theresa Primary School.

The number of pupils inspected totalled 1,982, to which the three above-named schools contributed 918.

Schools and grounds were kept clean and tidy. Nearly all schools had a good and abundant water supply which came by pipeline from hill reservoirs. Some few country schools obtained their water supply from a nearby running stream.

Overcrowding was in some instances noticeable. Ventilation and lighting were of a good standard.

The latrines were kept clean ; some were new and were in a good condition others were old and delapidated.

Helminthiasis and associated anæmia were still common amongst the pupils.

The pupils generally were better nourished, though there were still some who showed evidence of undernourishment.

The state of the children's teeth showed a general incidence of dental caries at 25—35% . The highest incidence occurred in the Town areas. The teeth of the younger children in their first term were particularly bad. The elder pupils after dental care, while at school, showed a much lower incidence of dental caries and oral sepsis.

The general oral condition of the children is to be expressed thus :—

i. 50% showed excellent dentition and normal development of neighbouring tissues.
ii. 15% showed extremely bad conditions. Rampant caries, oral sepsis, resulting in faulty mastication and undeveloped jaws and arches.
iii. 35% showed varying stages of dental defects.

The part time Dental Officer occupies as much of his time as is possible in attempting to "catch up" with the situation.

An interesting classification of dental caries and sepsis is set out below :—

i. Negroid—Best teeth—good development—high immunity.
ii. Mixed races and whites.—Greater susceptibility—required more artificial substitutes.
iii. Orientals especially Chinese.—Teeth usually in the most shocking state.

Free meals for school children on school days was instituted in 1945 at St. Elizabeth Catholic Mission.

Altogether 110 pupils were fed daily.

The giving of milk in the forenoon to most of the school children has had to be curtailed somewhat in 1945 owing to short supplies. It is hoped in 1946 when new supplies arrive to make this beneficial addition to their poor diet a daily issue throughout the year.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE WORK.

1,284 children attended the child welfare clinic and 191 expectant mothers came to the ante-natal clinics.

250 babies were born in the Maternity Ward at Seychelles Hospital. There were 22 still-births and 6 neonatal deaths. The latter deaths were due chiefly to asphyxia. There were 2 maternal deaths (1 Eclampsia, 1 malpresentation).

DENTAL CLINIC.

The Dental Surgeon visited the schools in Mahé, Praslin and La Digue.

The following work was carried :—

1. Schools :—Extractions 392, fillings 111, scalings 32.
2. Public Dental Service :—Extractions 1,226.

PORT HEALTH.

35 ships were granted full pratique.
3 ships were granted partial pratique.
1 ship was placed in quarantine for measles.

LABORATORY.

The work done in the Laboratory again showed an increase over the previous year.

Summary of work done:—

Urine examinations			1,871
Fæces			1,701
Sputum			461
Blood films examined			226
Examinations of smear and swabs			1,630
Throat cultures			4
Miscellaneous			35
Khan Tests	Positive	419	
	Doubtful	31	
	Negative	1,009	1,459
		Total	7,387

X—RAY DEPARTMENT.

Summary of work done:—

Radiography	188
Radioscopy	16

PRISON AND ASYLUM.

The Central Prison was visited on numerous occasions by a Medical Officer. The health of the prisoners was satisfactory.

MENTAL HOSPITAL ANSE ROYALE.

Number of patients remaining from 1944	36
Admitted during the year	6
Discharged as recovered	1
Number of patients out on trail	4
Total	45

PAUPER ASYLUM FIENNES INSTITUTE.

No change to report, the daily average number of inmates was 72, there were 23 deaths.

SPECIAL WORK RELATED TO THE WAR.

The arrangement made with the military in 1944, were continued in 1945 and worked well.

R. Y. DUNLOP,
Senior Medical Officer.

Diseases and Deaths by Groups classified in accordance with Manual of International List of causes of deaths 1938 Edition.

		Seychelles Hospital.			Anse Royale Out-patient.	Praslin and La Digue.		
		In patient.	Deaths.	Out-patient.		In-patient.	Deaths.	Out-patient.
I.	Infective and Parasitic Diseases ...	380	15	216	182	3	...	26
II.	Cancer and Other Tumours ...	19	1	7	3	...	...	10
III.	Rheumatism, etc. ...	17	1	441	37	...	...	47
IV.	Diseases of Blood, etc. ...	15	3	465	35	...	...	7
V.	Chronic Poisoning and Intoxication ...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...
VI.	Diseases of the Nervous System ...	179	4	202	48	3	...	69
VII.	„ „ „ Circulatory System ...	53	3	43	39	3	...	15
VIII.	„ „ „ Respiratory System ...	431	8	686	121	8	...	118
IX.	„ „ „ Digestive System ...	716	14	1077	272	9	...	209
X.	„ „ „ Urinary and Genital System (Non-venereal) ...	178	6	109	46	6	...	31
XI.	„ „ „ Pregnancy ...	372	2	65	...	51	...	8
XII.	„ „ „ Skin ...	266	1	140	148	5	...	97
XIII.	Diseases of the Bones ...	29	...	25	19	...	...	20
XIV.	Congenital Malformations ...	...	...	2	...	...	...	1
XV.	Diseases peculiar to 1st year ...	10	3	35	14	...	...	1
XVI.	Senility and Old Age ...	6	...	24	4	...	...	35
XVII.	Violence ...	284	1	139	134	12	...	90
XVIII.	Ill-Defined Causes ...	25	...	54	27	...	...	6
	Total ...	2983	62	3730	1129	100	...	790

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